

**Hawai'i property search**  
**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hawaii Employers Council

Other names/site number: TMK (1) 1-1-016:004

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 2682 Waiwai Loop

City or town: Honolulu State: HI County: Honolulu

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_national \_\_\_statewide \_\_\_local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

XA \_\_\_B XC \_\_\_D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Hawaii Employers Council Building

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐☐

Hawaii Employers Council Building

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Name of Property

Honolulu, Hawaii  
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Site

1

11

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

1

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

## 6. Function or Use

## Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

## Commerce/Organizational

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## Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce/Organizational

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Regional Commercial

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete, glass

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Hawaii Employers Council Building is a Mid-Century Regional Style, two-story, flat-roofed commercial building. Built in 1962, it is constructed of reinforced concrete and concrete masonry units (CMU) with an irregular floor plan that reflects the angle of the southern boundary of its parcel. It is set back from the street to accommodate parking. The front facade of the building consists of nine bays with articulated concrete columns separating a lattice-like concrete facade. A two-story curving concrete wall marks the main entry. The three southern bays are part of a building addition completed in 2000. The building maintains its integrity of location, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, but has lost some design and setting integrity due to the addition at the south side and the growth of the surrounding light industrial neighborhood.

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## Narrative Description

The Hawaii Employers Council building is located on Waiwai Loop in the Mapunapuna District of Honolulu, a light industrial area near the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport. At its rear, the building abuts Keehi Lagoon Park. The building extends across the width of its parcel and is set well back from the street. Its overall floor plan, a modified chevron shape, is approximately 11,070 square feet. It is two stories high and has a flat roof with a parapet. The building façade has two sections: the original 1962 portion to the north, and the addition from 2000 to the south.

On the original portion of the building there are six bays. Full height poured concrete columns separate the bays and extend slightly above the parapet wall. Decorative concrete in a lattice-like pattern with projecting CMU bricks covers the face of each bay, stopping just short of the columns. This smooth concrete section is currently painted red to accentuate the decorative elements of the façade. The decorative concrete treatment on each bay consists of three, equal, vertically subdivided sections with equally spaced horizontal concrete bars between. Between each horizontal bar are two CMU blocks turned perpendicular to the wall so that they jut out from the wall surface and create an interesting texture and shadow pattern on the wall.

The northernmost bay is wider than the other five, and projects slightly outward toward the street. The second and third bays are screened from view by an irregularly curved concrete wall with a smooth finish. This wall defines the entry and encloses a two-story lobby with an open staircase. The curved wall projects toward the west, gradually extending farther out as it progresses southward. In plan, the original portion of the building is largely rectangular, except for the slightly projecting first bay and curved concrete wall. The curved wall conceals the main entryway, which opens into a two-story lobby with a staircase and mezzanine. The lobby area is one of the few interior spaces of the building that has not been substantially reconfigured. The remaining interior of the building has numerous offices, conference rooms, and a large training room, but none of the rooms remain as they were originally designed in 1962.

The south portion of the building was designed by Philip White Architects and completed in 2000. It abuts the south wall of the original building, has three bays, and a chevron-shaped plan with an approximately 135-degree angle at the center bay, which responds to the southern property line. This addition is the same two-story height as the original portion but is set back a few feet. The first floor is open, providing a covered parking area for twelve cars below, while the second floor is comprised of additional office and conference spaces. The outer bays of this addition match the six bays of the 1962 building in cladding and dimensions and shields most of the parking from view. The addition's center bay is smooth concrete with a large strip of windows and is open at the ground floor to allow vehicular access to the covered parking area.

At the front of the building, windows are fixed glass with painted metal frames. The three primary entry doors tucked behind the curving wall are storefront double glass doors with fixed glass panels surrounding them. Other entry doors leading to minor spaces are single flush metal doors.

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The rear of the building also appears as two separate sections. The original rear portion is divided into six bays with columns that are engaged with the first-floor level. The wall of the second level is inset, creating a second-floor balcony with pipe rails, which looks out over Keehi Lagoon Park and toward downtown Honolulu. The columns at this level are outside the balcony and "T" back under the wide overhang before extending past it.

At the rear on the ground level are two single doors, two storefront double doors, and two sets of windows. The storefront doors have fixed glass panels surrounding them. Pergolas mark the location of these doors. At the second level there are floor-to-ceiling windows comprised of multiple fixed glass panels that provide a view towards the park and ocean beyond. The building's southeast end is open at the first level covered parking. The second level along the addition has windows that match those of the front façade addition.

The Hawaii Employers Council Building's retains much of its historic integrity. There have been no significant alterations to the exterior of the original portion of the building. The building retains its original function as well as the original users. The building maintains its integrity of location, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Integrity of design has been somewhat impacted due to the addition in 2000, however, the addition is clearly differentiated from the original building by a setback, is sympathetic in design, and does not detract significantly from the original building's overall appearance. The setting has been somewhat compromised by the surrounding dense development but the building maintains most of its open grassy front area as well as its original view toward Keehi Lagoon Park and Honolulu from the rear of the building.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Social History

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1962-2012

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1962, 2000

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Wimberly and Cook

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Hawaii Employers Council Building is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with the history of labor relations in Hawai'i, and under Criterion C for its regional modernist design by the architectural firm Wimberly and Cook and its successor firm, Wimberly, Allison, Tong & Goo, which had a major influence on Hawaii's architecture in this period. The building was completed in February of 1962 at which time the Hawaii Employers Council took occupancy and has been in continuous use by the Employers Council since that time. The period of significance starts in 1962, the year the building was completed, and ends at the fifty-year point, 2012. The end date is based on the Employers Council's continuously expanding role in Hawaii's labor relations over a fifty-year period while headquartered in this building. Additionally, this building represents an example of Wimberly and Cook's smaller and lesser-known work during the early 1960s. Despite being a small commission, the building expresses the firm's Modern and Regional style and the innovation for which they became known.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

#### **Criterion A**

The Hawaii Employers Council building is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with the history of labor relations in Hawai'i. The organization was founded in 1943 in response to the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, which guaranteed the rights of workers to organize. Much like the American South, Hawai'i has a notorious history of poor treatment of its plantation workers that dates to the mid-1800s. Relations between labor and management in Hawai'i was contentious long before World War II when the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) organized the dock workers and was making gains on the sugar and pineapple plantations. The Council formed to organize the employers, bring the unions to the table, and stabilize these relations through wages and working conditions fair to both sides rather than endure further strikes and lockouts. By February 1962, when the Council moved to its new offices on Waiwai Loop, it had over 300 members who acted as a solid bloc under Council guidance. The Employers Council has occupied the same building continuously since that time.

#### Labor History in Hawai'i

The labor movement in Hawai'i developed slowly and relatively late compared to other places. Early attempts to organize workers were limited to sporadic efforts by plantation laborers, and were generally small, localized moves aimed to not only increase wages, but also to improve living and working conditions.

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The First western style sugar plantations appeared in Hawai'i in the 1840s,<sup>1</sup> took off in the 1880s, and by the 1920s had totally changed both the physical and the socio-economic landscape of the Islands. By the end of the 19th century Hawai'i had transitioned from a sovereign Hawaiian nation to "an American industrial colony devoted to production of sugarcane [and to a lesser extent, pineapple] for the western U.S. market."<sup>2</sup>

Sugar cane had long been a crop of the Hawaiians and so plantation owners naturally turned first to Hawaiians to fill their labor needs. But the Hawaiians did not accept the harsh conditions of plantation work in exchange for money (or, more often, scrip that could be redeemed only at the plantation store), preferring their traditional ways of working and providing for themselves and their families. Hawaii's first recorded strike occurred in 1841 when the Hawaiian workers walked off the job for eight days to get a pay increase. In addition, the native Hawaiian population numbers were steadily decreasing, due primarily to the new diseases brought by the influx of foreigners to the islands after 1800.

Plantation owners quickly realized the need to import labor from elsewhere so they and their factors (the largest of which came to collectively be known as the "Big Five") brought in contract laborers from countries around the world. The first of which came from China in 1852. A contract laborer at a sugar or pineapple plantation was obligated to work a set period of years (typically three or five), six days a week at a set sum per month. These first Chinese contract laborers were brought to Hawai'i under five-year contracts that essentially made them indentured servants. They were given passage to the islands, \$3.00 in salary per month, food, clothing, and a house.<sup>3</sup>

Conditions on the plantations were hard from the outset. The laborers worked 26 days a month and a minimum of 10 hours per day. The overseers, known as *luna*, rode on horses and used whips to control the workers. The planters were determined to obtain and hold a "stable" labor force, and in this the planters had the assistance of the law.

Government regulation was another reason organization was slow to take hold in Hawai'i. The Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society was formed in 1850 to protect plantation interests and to facilitate the importation of cheap labor. That same year the Masters and Servants Act was passed by the Hawaiian government and was in effect until annexation in 1900. Under this act, said to have been modeled after slave laws in the U.S. south, authorities could legally charge contract laborers for leaving their employment prior to the end of their contract, or for refusing to work. And, under the Hawaiian Constitution of 1840, these laborers had no voting rights.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first industrial production of sugar was on Kauai at the Kōloa Plantation in 1840.

<sup>2</sup> Carol A. MacLennan, *Sovereign Sugar: Industry and Environment in Hawaii*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu., 2041, p.4.

<sup>3</sup> History of Labor in Hawaii, <https://www.hawaii.edu/uhwo/clear/home/HawaiiLaborHistory.html>

<sup>4</sup> Wilma Sur, *Hawaii's Master and Servants Act: Brutal Slavery?* University of Hawaii Law Review, 2008. p.4.

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Beginning in the mid-1860s plantation owners, called the Planters Society (and later the Hawai'i Sugar Planters Association (HSPA)), conducted meetings to discuss the need for additional workers on the plantations. These meetings were instrumental in formulating the Hawaiian Territory's immigration policy that would fuel the demand for plantation workers. The onset of the Civil War (1861-1865) brought sugar production in the southern United States to a virtual halt, significantly increasing the demand (and price) for Hawai'i sugar. These two events led to a Board of Immigration appointed by the King that, in turn, led to more Chinese workers arriving in Hawai'i, this time under the auspices of the government rather than the plantation owners.<sup>5</sup> Immigration labor was intended to be under the purview of the government but the plantation owners regularly bypassed this regulation and contracted on their own for additional workers. Upon their arrival the Hawaiian government would relent and admit the new workers. The disconnect in the system stemmed from the Hawai'i government's desire to bring "useful and industrious citizens and subjects," young married couples, who would be assets to the community upon completion of their contracts. Plantation owners favored "more profitable" single young men.

The plantations fostered a class system based on ethnicity that kept the different ethnic groups physically separated and emphasized the differences between them to maintain control over their workforce; and they did so as an organized bloc. In 1882, the planters organized the Planters' Labor and Supply Company to coordinate the wages they would pay to employees who were not on contract. Each plantation paid its workers based on a few factors. The first was the job done – unskilled labor, work as an overseer or *luna*, or skilled labor. Japanese, Chinese and non-whites were frequently assigned non-skilled labor, and *lunas* and skilled laborers were typically white, with a few exceptions. The plantations often paid workers of different ethnicities at different rates for the same job. Planters worked together to fix wages to ensure a day laborer would not leave one plantation to seek higher wages at another.

Planters continued to bring in foreign laborers until 1898 when, newly annexed to the United States, Hawai'i was no longer allowed by law to bring in contract labor. By this time plantations had already brought in Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, German, Korean, Norwegian, Spanish, Puerto Rican, African American, and Filipino workers. They hoped to replace the workers who left at the end of their contracts with laborers who might stay longer, but this diversity was also in part to prevent the Chinese population from becoming the largest group in the islands. The special interests of the plantations continued to guide the laws, including an 1892 law which mandated that Chinese in Hawai'i could only engage in agricultural field work or in rice and sugar mills

Perhaps more importantly, they wanted to create a multi-cultural workforce that would be less likely to collaborate with each other against the planters.<sup>6</sup> Between 1853 and 1896 the number of Chinese and Japanese workers in Hawai'i went from approximately 400 to over 46,000.<sup>7</sup> By

<sup>5</sup> Carol A. MacLennan, *Sovereign Sugar: Industry and Environment in Hawaii*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2041, p.223.

<sup>6</sup> Takaki, Ronald. *Pau Hana*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983.

<sup>7</sup> Wilma Sur, *Hawaii's Master and Servants Act: Brutal Slavery?* University of Hawaii Law Review, 2008. p.2.

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1900, annexation was formalized, and the planters began to worry that the Japanese population was growing too large. From 1886 to 1925 180,000 Japanese workers had been brought to Hawai'i.<sup>8</sup> It is also noteworthy that between 1875 and 1890, both the land under sugar cultivation and the actual sugar production increased ten-fold.<sup>9</sup>

Organized strikes were rare prior to the end of the Masters and Servants Act in 1900 but increased in frequency once workers no longer faced legal punishment for failure to work. Though the Masters and Servants Act was no longer in force, this had little effect on wages or conditions on the plantations. Early on, these strikes primarily organized along racial lines, and were quickly broken when plantations offered the work to other groups willing break the strike.

1909 saw the first documented labor union on plantations: the Zokuyu Kisei Kai (Higher Wage Association). This was also the year of the first large-scale plantation strike. About 5000 Japanese workers joined the strike, that, after three months, was considered a loss but was so well-organized that workers were given a wage increase, housing conditions were improved, and progress began to provide schools, churches, and recreation opportunities for the plantation workers. It also brought about the end of wage differentials based on race. A widespread 1920 strike also forwarded some of the social welfare programs but was otherwise unsuccessful and was vehemently denounced in the island newspapers as a conspiracy to take over Hawai'i.<sup>10</sup>

Federal law had traditionally not allowed workers to organize into unions, but through years of agitation and demands for better working conditions and the right to organize across the mainland United States, the Federal government passed the Labor Relations Act of 1935, which gave workers the right to legally organize and form unions. Few strikes occurred in Hawai'i between the passage of the act and 1943, when the Hawaii Employers Council was formed. This was due to legal challenges to the act that were not settled until 1937, the effects of the Great Depression, and later, to the restrictions put on workers by the implementation of martial law in the islands during World War II.<sup>11</sup>

Away from the plantations the labor movement in Hawai'i was also minimal. In 1857 the Hawaiian Mechanics Benefit Union formed the first know union, but it lasted only a short time. The only other union on record in Hawai'i prior to annexation was the Typographical Union. After annexation in 1898 a few skilled labor unions, primarily building trades, began to form. These unions proved also to be short lived, in large part because they excluded non-Caucasians in a workforce that was increasingly Asian.

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<sup>8</sup> Labor Organizing Changed the Hawaiian Islands Forever: <https://www.apwu.org/news/labor-organizing-changed-hawaiian-islands-forever>, 2003. (First published in The American Postal Worker magazine)

<sup>9</sup> Wilma Sur, Hawaii's Master and Servants Act: Brutal Slavery? University of Hawaii Law Review, 2008. p.8.

<sup>10</sup> Let Us Declare Ourselves: An Editorial., *Honolulu Advertiser*, February 8, 1920, p.1 (Second Section)

<sup>11</sup> Gavan Daws. *Shoal of Time*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1968. p. 362.

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Not until the longshoremen in Hilo and Kaua'i began organizing in 1935 did a truly inter-racial union movement emerge that could challenge the Big Five and the political weight it wielded. It would not be until labor organizers began to unionize without regard to ethnicity that they would be able to make greater inroads toward the wages and benefits they sought. The 1946 Territory-wide strike took these lessons and capitalized on them. At that time nearly one-fifth of the population of Hawai'i worked on plantations. Led by the ILWU, striking workers shut down all but one of the 34 Hawai'i plantations. Lasting 79 days, the strike was sustained by community involvement that included soup kitchens, evening entertainments, community gardens, and business contributions to the needy. The banding together of the entire community, regardless of ethnicity, "not only won the 1946 sugar strike, it also laid the foundation for political change."<sup>12</sup> That same year the ILWU led a dock strike that lasted 171 days to attain pay equity with their counterparts on the U.S. mainland. The strike, which brought shipping to a virtual standstill across the islands, was only partially successful (wages were increased but not up to mainland levels), it did usher in a new political activism that saw union-endorsed candidates elected to the Territorial Legislature where these elected officials, many of whom were World War II veterans and children of plantation owners, were able to win benefits and protections for the Hawai'i workers.

Hawaii Employers Council

The founders of the Hawaii Employers Council recognized that with the increased power of local unions, the potential existed for strikes to have a crippling effect on Hawaii's local industries. The founders were aware of labor disputes on the mainland and hoped to prevent the kind of large-scale strikes that they saw happening in such places as the docks in San Francisco.<sup>13</sup> They believed that it was only a matter of time before the employees organized and began to make demands of their employers. The Employers Council was a way for the companies to organize and to meet workers' demands as a bloc.

This move to organize as employers was led by members of the "Big Five" companies (Castle & Cooke, Alexander & Baldwin, C. Brewer & Co., American Factors [Amfac] and Theo H. Davies & Co.), but included many smaller employers as well. Each member company had an "equal voice" in determining the policies of the council, so that they felt it was not the "Big Five" who were solely in charge.<sup>14</sup> Some of the main stated goals of the Employers Council were to prevent strikes, and to ensure fair treatment for both employers and employees. To do this, the council provided several services to its members. Research, especially wage surveys, and training programs were among these. Negotiation was perhaps the council's most important service, helping companies to navigate collective bargaining agreements with their employees and their representatives.

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<sup>12</sup> Labor Organizing Changed the Hawaiian Islands Forever: <https://www.apwu.org/news/labor-organizing-changed-hawaiian-islands-forever>, 2003. (First published in The American Postal Worker magazine)

<sup>13</sup> Edward Johannessen. *The Hawaiian Labor Movement; A Brief History*. Boston: Bruce Humphries, 1955. p. 131.

<sup>14</sup> Hawaii Employers Council. "For Industrial Stability." Honolulu, Hawaii: The Council, 1946. p. 3.

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The Employers Council's purpose was to meet the power of workers' unions with the power of an organized group of employers. By setting rules for all members to follow in negotiations with employees, it allowed businesses to negotiate from a position of strength, with many other businesses in the community following the same policies. The unions had no option but to make deals rather than play one business' concessions off another business in negotiation.

The 1960s and 70s saw the unionization of government employees under President John F. Kennedy's 1961 Executive Order, which applied to federal employees, and Hawai'i State Legislature's 1970 Public Employee Collective Bargaining Law, which applied to state and county employees. With the organization of these workers, the 1970s saw the highest levels of union membership in the state's history. In addition, the unions created coalitions amongst themselves to gain even more leverage for negotiation. The Employers Council aim, as the only coalition of businesses in the state, is to enable employers to balance the strength of the unions.

The Employers Council has fluctuated in number of members over time, but has grown, overall, and continues to provide much the same services to its members that it did at the time of its founding. Numerous rooms inside its building are set aside for negotiation conferences, a large room is used for management training, a library holds resources in pertinent areas, and there is a section set aside for publication of research and other materials by the Council.

### Criterion C

The Hawaii Employers Council Building is locally significant under Criterion C for its design by Wimberly and Cook, which along with its successor firm Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo (WATG), has influenced the architecture of Hawai'i for over half a century. The Hawaii Employers Council building is a notable example of the firm's early, small-scale work in Hawai'i, characterized by a largely Modern, but regional, design. Wimberly and Cook's early work was noted for the use of innovative local styles, materials and shapes, while WATG's later work helped usher in the modern-day resort era, with hotels designed with a Pacific or tropical aesthetic, in unprecedented size and scale. The firm and its successor ultimately gained international prominence for the design of resort properties.

#### Wimberly and Cook/Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo

The architectural firm of Wimberly and Cook was formed in Hawai'i just after World War II. George Wimberly and Howard Cook had worked for Contractors, Pacific Naval Air Bases (CPNAB) on military construction projects during the war and subsequently opened their own firm in Waikiki after the end of the war. From its inception, Wimberly and Cook's intent was to specialize in hotel and resort design. One of the firms first commissions was to renovate the Royal Hawaiian Hotel (originally constructed in 1927) in Waikiki as the local associate architect for Gardiner A. Dailey of San Francisco, the lead architect. The design of their McNerny Store (1950), was another early Waikiki commission and was noteworthy for its recalling of Maori men's houses.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Fung Associates, Inc. *Hawaii Modernism Context Study*, Prepared for Historic Hawaii Foundation November, 2011. p. 3-20.

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During the 1950s and 60s, Wimberly and Cook's commissions for commercial properties gained the firm notice for their use of local Hawaiian influences as well as innovative materials and shapes. Wimberly and Cook was one of the first firms in Hawai'i to use materials such as tilt-up concrete, slip forming, and thin shelled systems.<sup>16</sup> Their innovative use of different types of materials allowed them to design uniquely shaped buildings, often with tropical antecedents.

Wimberly and Cook's Canlis Restaurant (1953) on Kalakaua Avenue (designed in part by the Seattle-based firm of Terry and Moore) had modern lines, but also expressed the Pacific style using local materials and flowing indoor-outdoor relationships. Their Waikikian Hotel (1956), with its dramatic roofline, was "an exception to the norm [as a] low-rise modern adaptation of Pacific Island forms that made 'hyperbolic paraboloid' a household word in the fifties in Honolulu."<sup>17</sup> The hotel, later referred to as "probably Hawaii's most ambitious example of regional style,"<sup>18</sup> illustrated the merger of "Modern" and Pacific-style architecture.

Wimberly and Cook's Windward City Shopping Center (1958), received national attention in an *Architectural Record* article. Its Foodland Supermarket had a thin-shell curved concrete roof that was the largest concrete shell in the Territory, comprised of nearly half an acre of concrete.<sup>19</sup>

Wimberly and Cook, with engineer George Whisenand, also designed the 12-story, Diamond Head Wing of the Princess Kaiulani Hotel (1959). It was "the first high-rise building in Hawai'i of precast, pre-stressed concrete."<sup>20</sup> This larger-scaled hotel was completed the same year that Hawai'i gained Statehood. The advent of jet air travel occurred at roughly the same time; tourism was booming, and large hotels were needed in Waikiki to accommodate the increasing numbers of visitors.

In 1963, the newly completed Varsity Building on University Avenue became Honolulu's first large, round, commercial building.<sup>21</sup> Although Howard L. Cook, AIA, signed the original drawings, the design was likely accomplished under the auspices of Wimberly and Cook before their 1962 breakup.

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<sup>16</sup> Wimberly Whisenand Tong & Goo. "Portfolio for AIA Fellowship Nomination George V. Whisenand FAIA." On website: Prepared for AIA Hawaii AIA Communities. c. 1984. [communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WhisenandGeorge\\_FAIA.pdf](http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WhisenandGeorge_FAIA.pdf) (accessed February 23, 2013). p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Don Hibbard, *Designing Paradise*. (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press) 2006. p. 78.

<sup>18</sup> Fung Associates, Inc. *Hawaii Modernism Context Study*, Prepared for Historic Hawaii Foundation November, 2011. p. 3-20.

<sup>19</sup> Fung Associates, Inc. *Hawaii Modernism Context Study*, Prepared for Historic Hawaii Foundation November, 2011. p. 4-11.

<sup>20</sup> Portfolio for AIA Fellowship Nomination George V. Whisenand, Prepared for AIA Hawaii AIA Communities. c. 1984, on website [http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WhisenandGeorge\\_FAIA.pdf](http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WhisenandGeorge_FAIA.pdf), accessed February 23, 2013. p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> "Round and Round", Honolulu Star-Bulletin, September 18, 1963.

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The Hawaii Employers Council building was completed in 1962, roughly at the time of the firm's disbandment. At this time, Hawaii's was still a young state, and architectural design in Hawai'i had moved away from old, Territorial styles toward forms that were "contemporary, sophisticated, and locally formed."<sup>22</sup> The Hawaii Employers Council Building expressed this design direction with a unique lack of fenestration on the front façade, replaced with an almost woven texture that was articulated from CMU on the primary bays. It also had a unique, irregularly curved concrete wall that shielded the two-story lobby with an open stair.

The dissolution of the partnership in 1962 is said to have stemmed from a disagreement regarding "Wimberly's desire to expand beyond the borders of Hawai'i."<sup>23</sup> With the departure of Cook and the addition of several partners, Wimberly and Cook became Wimberly, Whisenand, Allison & Tong Architects, Ltd. In the 1960s and 70s, the firm's projects grew, with contracts throughout the Pacific region, including American Samoa, Fiji, Tahiti, Bora Bora, Singapore, and Malaysia.

George Wimberly designed the Coco Palms expansion (1956-1965) on Kauai in the "Tiki Style." Of the hotel, Wimberly said in 1965, "It's a matter of verisimilitude – the appearance of reality – rather than authenticity, but it reflects the spirit of things that are distinctive here."<sup>24</sup>

From the late 1960s through the 1970s and 80s, the height and scale of hotels and resorts in Hawai'i expanded in response to the growing tourism industry. George Wimberly "was among the first to translate a Hawai'i atmosphere into concrete on the neighbor islands with the Sheraton Maui (1963) and Kona Hilton (1968) hotels."<sup>25</sup> Wimberly, Whisenand, Allison & Tong partnered with Vladimir Ossipoff in the design of the Royal Kaanapali Golf Course Clubhouse, completed in 1967. This clubhouse was in a distinctly non-Country Club setting of a tropic resort. Their design established "a prototype that has been widely emulated throughout the island chain with a variety of design embellishments."<sup>26</sup>

In 1971, the addition of another partner, Donald Goo, changed the firm's name once again, to Wimberly, Whisenand, Allison, Tong & Goo. In 1971, their thirty-one story, 1,904-room Sheraton-Waikiki opened. "It was, at the time, the largest resort hotel in the world and the fifth largest hotel on the planet."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Dean Sakamoto, Editor, *Hawaiian Modern, The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2007 p. 13.

<sup>23</sup>Fung Associates, Inc. *Hawaii Modernism Context Study*, Prepared for Historic Hawaii Foundation November, 2011. p. 4-131.

<sup>24</sup> Mason Architects, Inc. 1950s Buildings in Waikiki and Honolulu: A Photo Essay. Prepared for 2100 Kalakaua Avenue. 2004. p. vi.

<sup>25</sup>Fung Associates, Inc. *Hawaii Modernism Context Study*, Prepared for Historic Hawaii Foundation November, 2011. p. 4-43.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 4-44.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p. 4-79.



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The firm's 1976 Hyatt Regency Waikiki, along with the John Tatum and Chamberlain & Associates' Hawaiian Regent hotel, "brought even larger hotels into Waikiki, but with them came a gracious openness with courtyards and upper-level swimming areas."<sup>28</sup> The Hyatt Regency Waikiki was thirty-nine stories with 1,260 rooms. Its \$150 million price tag made it the largest and most expensive construction project undertaken in the state. The company also built the neighbor islands' largest resort hotel; the 815 room Hyatt Regency Maui (1980) in Kaanapali. The Hyatt Regency Maui was designed by Wimberly, Whisenand, Allison & Tong, with resort developer Chris Hemmeter. It has been called "a commanding presence... that inspired the emergence of entirely new resort idioms for the islands."<sup>29</sup>

Wimberly, Whisenand, Allison, Tong & Goo resorts in the Pacific included the Pago Pago Intercontinental Hotel (1965) in American Samoa, the Fijian Hotel (1967) on Yanuca Island in the Hotel Bora Bora in Tahiti, the Shangri-La Hotel Garden Wing (1978) in Singapore, and the Tanjong Jara Beach Hotel (1999) in Terengganu, Malaysia.

An early 1980s firm brochure explained the firm's success:

It is not coincidental that the first 35 years of growth and development of WWAT&G has, to some extent, paralleled the growth of tourism in the Pacific Basin. Four factors were contributors to this: (1) the firm was established at the end of World War II, when tourism was first perceived as a promising industry for war-ravaged Pacific nations seeking ways to rebuild shattered economies; (2) the firm was based in Hawai'i, advantageously poised at the center of a vast and relatively untapped market of numerous Pacific and Asian nations; (3) WWAT&G was located within an already established, yet still expanding and thus architecturally needful, state-wide visitor destination area; and (4) founding principal, George J. Wimberly, was especially attracted to the challenges of hotel design. Throughout the firm's history, this emphasis has been maintained... Very early a corporate commitment was made to concentrate on hotel and other resort projects and to become an integral part of the growing Pacific area travel industry, both in Hawai'i and beyond.<sup>30</sup>

The name Whisenand was dropped with the death of George Whisenand in 1983, and the firm has since been known as Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo, or WATG. WATG continued to grow in the 1980s and 90s with the construction of luxury hotels and resorts in South Korea, India, Indonesia, Dubai, Cyprus, Egypt, England and more, and by 2001, had "worked on projects in 119 countries across six continents."<sup>31</sup> By 2013, according to its website, "WATG [had] designed more great hotels and resorts than any other firm on the planet". The firm now has offices in seven cities, including London and Singapore, and has designed hundreds of destination properties on all the populated continents of the world. The firm has won numerous local, national, and international awards for their designs.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid. pp. 4-43 to 4-44.

<sup>29</sup> Don Hibbard, *Designing Paradise*. (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press) 2006. p. 155.

<sup>30</sup> Wimberly Whisenand Allison Tong & Goo Architects, Ltd. *WWAT&G*. ca. 1983. P. 18. On website: [http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WWATG\\_brochure.pdf](http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WWATG_brochure.pdf) (accessed March 15, 2013).

<sup>31</sup> Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo. *Designing the World's Best Resorts*. 2001. p. 5.

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[communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WhisenandGeorge\\_FAIA.pdf](http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/T-Z/WhisenandGeorge_FAIA.pdf) (accessed February 23, 2013).

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☐ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☒ Other

Name of repository: Hawaii Employers Council

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 26,778 sf .61 ac.

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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Or

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 4	Easting: 614201	Northing: 2359426
2. Zone: 4	Easting: 614261	Northing: 2359404
3. Zone: 4	Easting: 614244	Northing: 2359396
4. Zone: 4	Easting : 614225	Northing: 2359361
5. Zone: 4	Easting : 614189	Northing: 2359400

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary conforms to Hawai'i state property records parcel number  
TMK (1)1-1-016:004 boundaries.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected conform to the layout of the Hawaii Employers Council's parcel,  
which have remained the same since the group acquired the property in 1961, and encompass  
the building, its parking and its landscaping.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Lesleigh Jones, edited by Angie Westfall

organization: Mason Architects

street & number: 119 Merchant Street Suite 501

city or town: Honolulu state: HI zip code: 96813

e-mail: aw@masonarch.com

telephone: (808) 536-0556

date: 25 March 2021

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### Additional Documentation

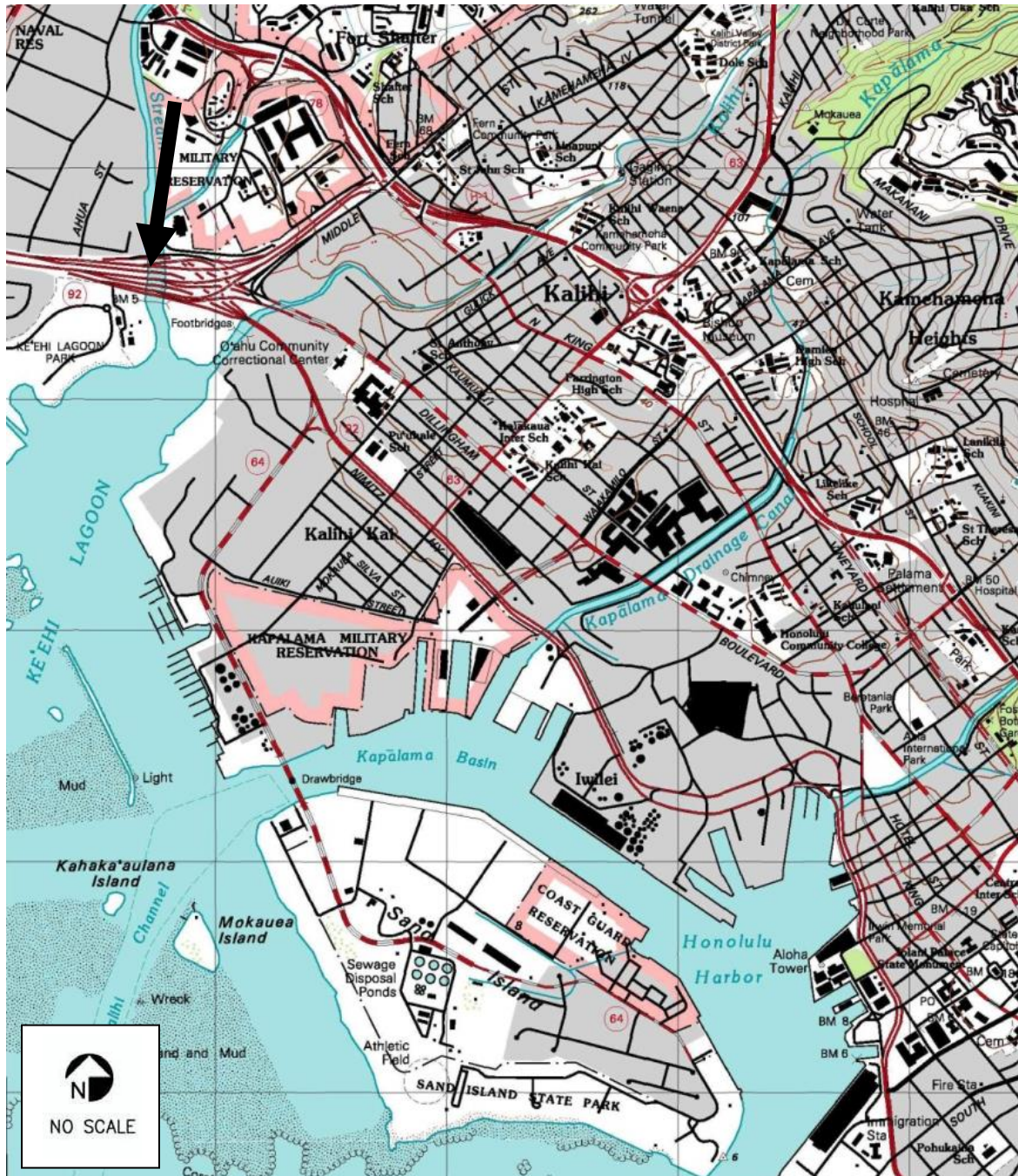
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Location map for Hawaii Employers Council: *USGS 7.5 minute series, Honolulu Quadrangle, 1998 (portion)*





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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Hawaii Employers Council

City or Vicinity: Honolulu

County: Honolulu

State: Hawai'i

Photographer: Lesleigh Jones

Date Photographed: 7 February 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0001)

Overview showing front of building; camera facing southwest.

Photo #2 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0002)

View of front original portion of building; northeast garden area on the left and two story entrance at center, camera facing southeast.

Photo #3 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0003)

Oblique view of rear of building; camera facing southwest.

Photo #4 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0004)

Detail of patterned CMU on one of the front bays; camera facing southeast.

Photo #5 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0005)

Oblique view of second story addition, showing parking below; camera facing southwest.

Photo #6 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0006)

Oblique view of parking area below second story addition; camera facing southeast.

Photo #7 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0007)

Detail of curved front wall at two-story entry; camera facing southeast.

Photo #8 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0008)

Detail of full-height side windows at two-story entry; camera facing southwest.

Photo #9 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0009)

Detail of original lobby staircase; camera facing west.



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Photo Key



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HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil\_0001



Hawaii Employers Council Building  
Name of Property

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Photo #2 (HI\_HonoluluCounty\_HawaiiEmployersCouncil \_0002)





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HI\_HonoluluCounty\_ HawaiiEmployersCouncil \_0003



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**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.